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The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 24 September 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement by the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization on the situation in Syria and the surrounding area (see annex), adopted at the Organization's summit in Sochi on 23 September 2013.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 35, and as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vitaly **Churkin**

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Annex to the identical letters dated 24 September 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement by the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization on the situation in Syria and the surrounding area

The States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization are seriously concerned by the development of the situation in Syria and the surrounding area. They call for the achievement of peace, stability, prosperity and progress in that country and in the whole of the Middle East region.

The States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization consider that external intervention, including by force, is unacceptable and may lead to even greater destabilization of the situation in the country and far beyond the region. In addition, any international intervention in the Syrian conflict which bypasses the United Nations Security Council and violates the Organization's charter is illegitimate.

The States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization support the efforts of the Russian Federation to achieve a settlement to the Syrian crisis exclusively through political and diplomatic means, and endorse the implementation of the Russian and United States proposals, agreed in Geneva from 12 to 14 September 2013, on measures relating to Syrian chemical weapons, believing that they will help to achieve the overall aim of eliminating all stocks of chemical weapons.

The States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization believe that the crisis must be resolved as rapidly as possible by the Syrian people themselves, with respect for the sovereignty of the Syrian Arab Republic, an end to violence in the country, and the launch of broad political dialogue between the authorities and the opposition, without preconditions and on the basis of the Geneva communiqué of 30 June 2012.

The States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization support the efforts to convene an international conference to lay the foundation for reconciliation and normalization in Syria. They condemn decisively any manifestation of terrorism and any violence against a peaceful population, especially on the grounds of religion or nationality, and oppose illegitimate acts aimed at further militarization of the internal conflict in Syria.

Sochi, 23 September 2013